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Met Office academic partnership launched

30 November 2010

Building on a strong history of scientific collaboration, the Met Office, University of Exeter, University of Leeds and the University of Reading are joining forces to form the Met Office Academic Partnership. This formal collaboration will advance the science and skill of weather and climate prediction.

The partnership aims to combine the strengths of the universities and the Met Office to secure the UK's position in leading the world in weather forecasting and climate prediction, and provide an outstanding environment to develop the atmospheric science leaders of the future.

Chief Scientific Adviser to the UK Government, Sir John Beddington, said: "Our economies and societies are increasingly vulnerable to hazardous weather and climatic changes. To understand the challenges we face and to help build resilience requires cutting-edge scientific research and its application to practical policy making and decisions.

"I welcome this Partnership which seeks to boost our national capability, by harnessing better the excellence that exists within the UK Met Office and across academia."

Julia Slingo, Met Office Chief Scientist, said: "This is the first time that a group of universities has joined forces with a leading government organisation to form a cluster of research excellence aimed at accelerating science research to benefit society.

"This is just the start of what I hope will be an exciting joint venture and only one element of our collaborations, both here and overseas, aimed at maximising the benefit of the UK's world-class expertise in weather forecasting and climate prediction."

The Met Office already collaborates on around 40 projects with the universities within the Academic Partnership and supports over 30 Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering (CASE) studentships. This new relationship will create a cluster of over 1,000 scientists working in areas from atmospheric chemistry and air quality to weather extremes and risk management.

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